



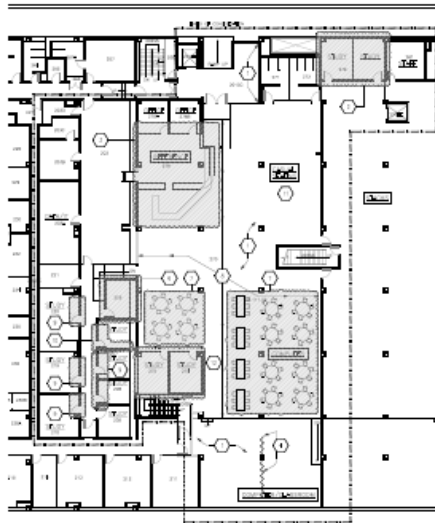
FUSION: Melding Reference and Access Services Into A Single User Service Point In An Academic Health Sciences Library



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
LIBRARIES
Health Sciences Libraries

Katherine Chew
Associate Director for Research, Collections and
Access Services
Health Sciences Libraries
University of Minnesota

Change Driver #1

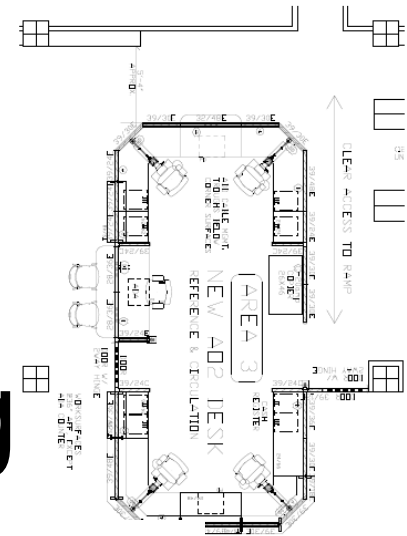


UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
DEHL HALL BIOMEDICAL LIBRARY
PARTIAL SECOND FLOOR RENOVATION

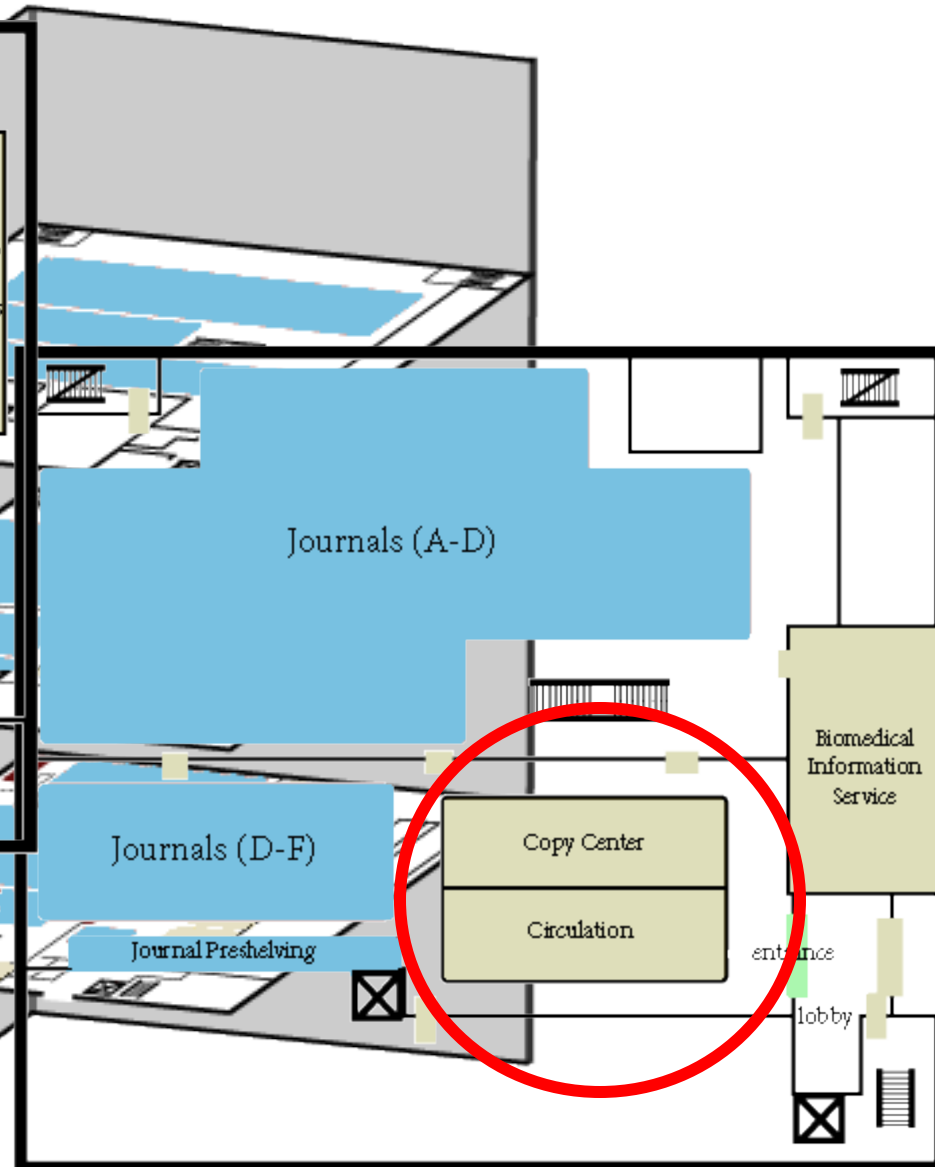
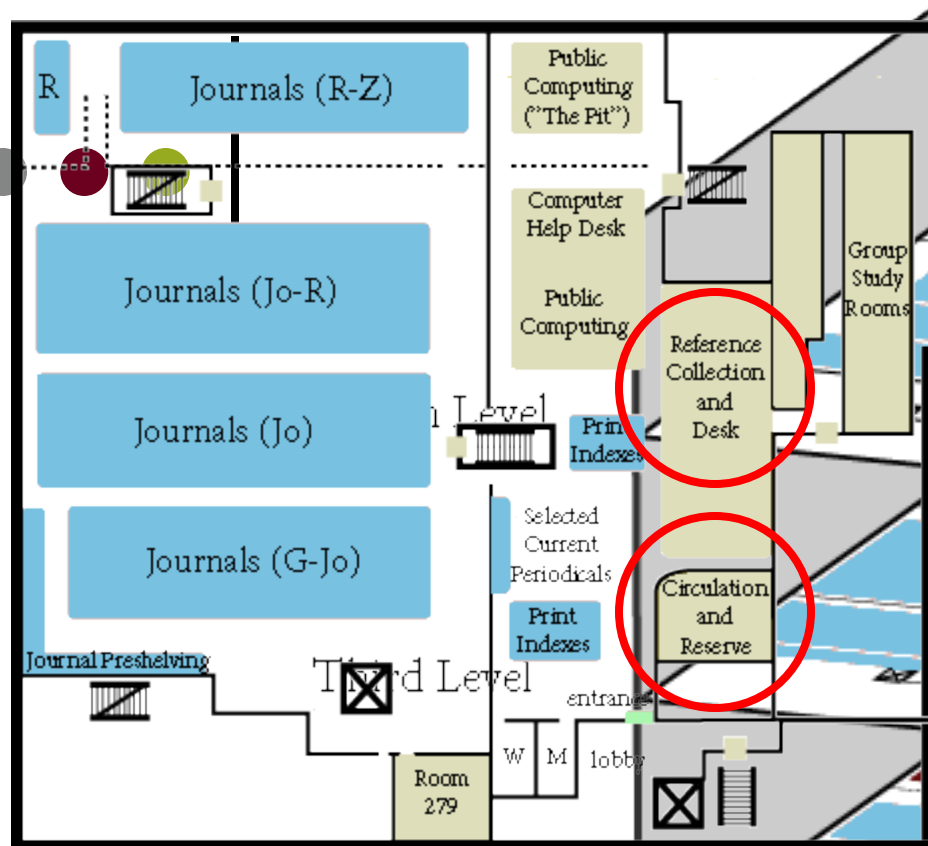


CONCEPT PLAN
REVISED FEBRUARY 27, 2022
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

1
SHEET 1 OF 2

plan diagram | **existing**

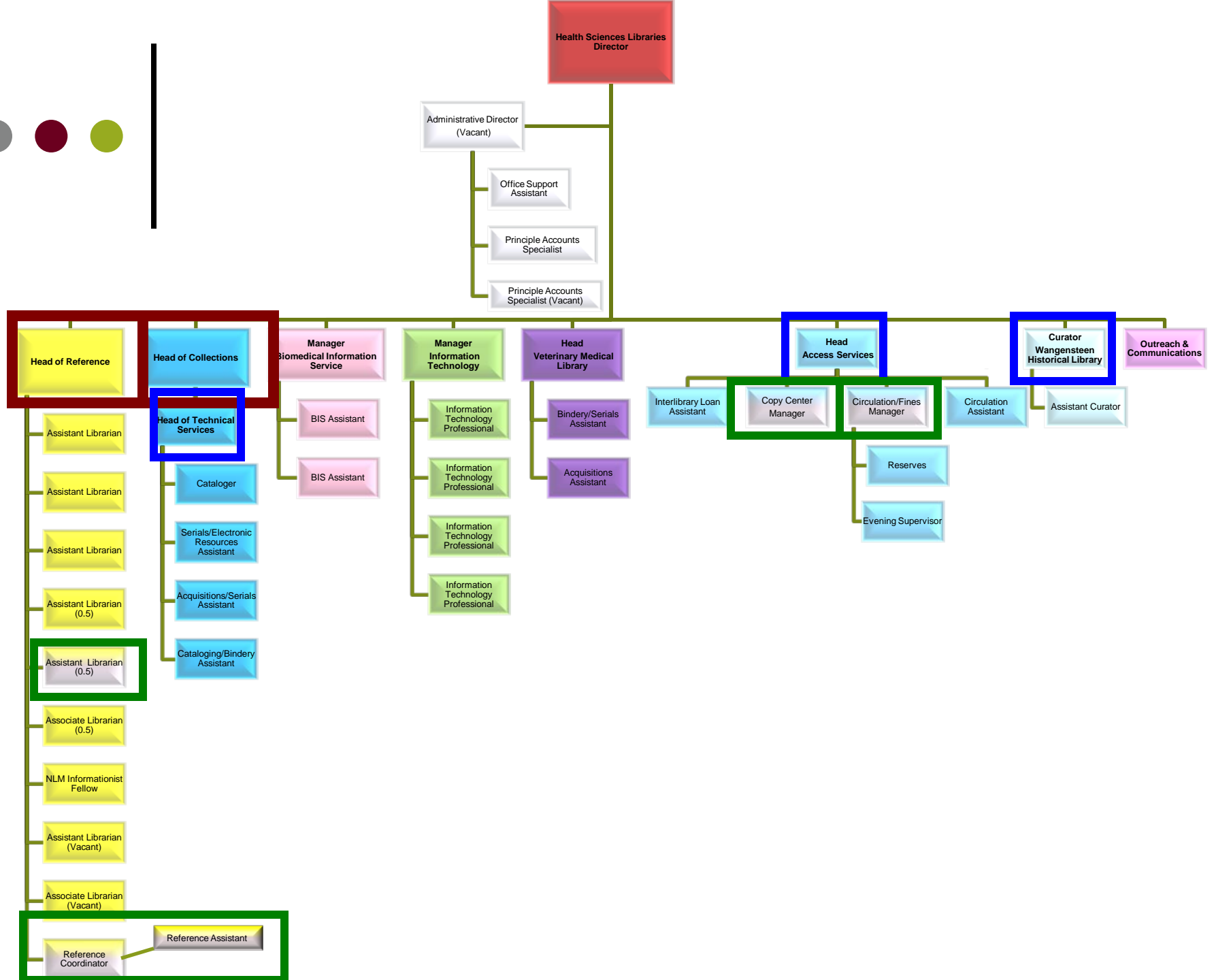
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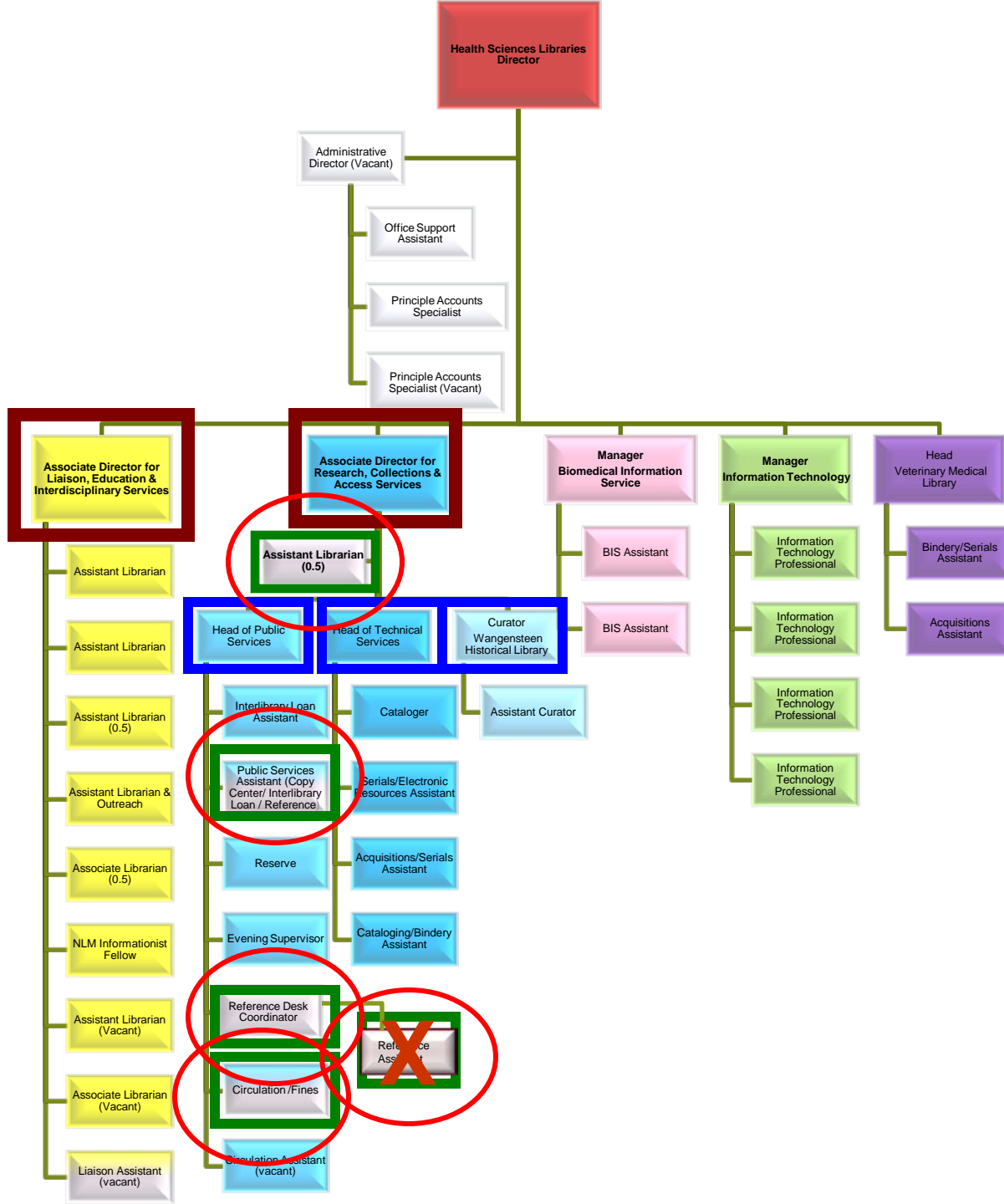
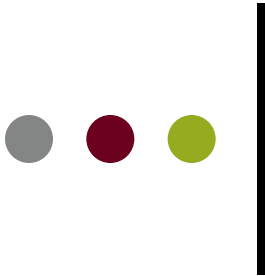


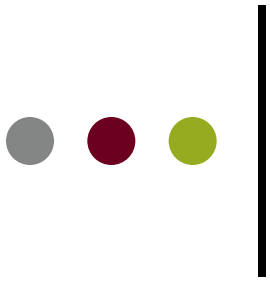
Change Driver #2

Health Sciences Libraries
Re-Organization









Definitions

Change is situational. Out with the old, in with the new. It's a physical move, a new process, a hire or a retirement

Transition involves a psychological re-orientation process as people come to terms with change and how it affects them, their jobs or their responsibilities.

Briggs, William. *Managing transitions: making the most of change*. 2nd ed. Perseus Books, 2003



Interview Questions

- Briefly tell me about your job/role and your responsibilities now and in the new organization?
- What do you feel is the primary mission of Access Services? Has it changed as a result of the reorganization? What expectations must your unit fulfill?
- What is helping and what is hindering attainment of the mission and expectations for your unit?
- What 3 wishes would you have for your unit?
- What topics do you feel you must address at your transition offsite meeting? Time will be well-spent if ...
- What questions/information would you like from Katherine or Linda?
- Other questions, concerns, or comments?



Another Definition

Active Listening:

“Active listening is an important way to bring about changes in people. ... sensitive listening is a most effective agent for individual personality change and group development. Listening brings about changes in peoples attitudes toward themselves and others; it also brings about changes in their basic values and personal philosophy.”

Rogers, Carl R., and Farson, Richard E. (1987) Active listening. In Newman, R.G., et al.(eds). *Communicating in Business Today*, DC Health & Company



Components of Active Listening

- Attentive body language
- Following skills – allowing the speaker the space to tell their story in their own way
- Noting all of the cues, both verbal and nonverbal
- Reflecting skills – restating the feeling and/or content with understanding and acceptance



Access Service + Public Services Reference Services

Note: Work at the Circulation Desk occurs mostly on a transactional basis. The following is a summary of

tively, DW looks up patron

Course Reserve
reserve."
course, (c) author and/or (d)
e or MNCAT or both.
e, DW retrieves item.
to use items in A100h GP

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and ILL staff person)

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f me
- Test

Hi Katherine,

I've been thinking about the reserve space, my workspace, and the typical workflow for reserves and here's what I've come up with. If this isn't specific enough or seems inaccurate in some way (such as "good grief, what can the woman possibly be thinking!") I trust you'll give me a call 😊

I've currently got approximately 18 ft. countertop work area. I pretty much fill it up all the time, but that's with things spread out some and I could definitely condense things, particularly if I could get an additional file drawer. Right now I've got one two drawer, 34" long

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t need human
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ding on fulltime staff

Bold Lettering indicates who typically does this work.

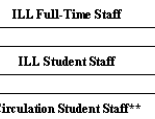
Borrowing

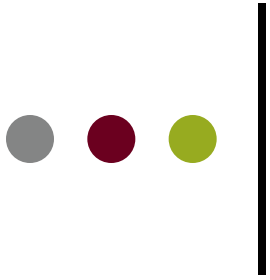
- New patrons are cleared in **ILLiad** (ILLiad Borrowing required) (Staff Aleph required) **Staff**
- Clear copyright (File Maker required) **Staff**
- Check patron requests with **MNCAT Staff and Students**
- Cancel items available on campus including E-Journals: **Staff and Students**
- Process requests (Search for available library locations using **Decline**, and **OCLC**). **Staff and Students**
- Submit requests. **Staff and Students**
- Process problem requests (Search available databases, or indexes and Google to verify citations). **Staff**
- Check in articles (Ariel and **ILLiad** are required). Make sure the correct article was sent and check scan quality. **Students**
- Route articles to Wilson ILL for posting. **Students**
- Process unfilled requests (Search for more library locations using **Decline** and **OCLC**). **Staff**
- Place received loans on hold shelf. **Staff**
- Answer phone and check office email for patron questions and issues. **Staff**

- New patrons are checked in **ILLiad** (**ILLiad** Borrowing required) (**Staff** Aleph required) **Staff**
- Clear copyright (**File Maker** required) **Staff**
- Check patron requests with **MNCAT Staff and Students**
- Cancel items available on campus including E-Journals. **Staff and Students**
- Process requests (Search for available library locations using **Docline**, and **OCLC**). **Staff and Students**
- Submit requests. **Staff and Students**
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- Check in articles (**Ariel** and **ILLiad** are required). Make sure the correct article was sent and check scan quality. **Students**
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- Process unfilled requests (Search for more library locations using **Docline** and **OCLC**). **Staff**
- Place received loans on hold shelf. **Staff**
- Answer phone and check office email for patron questions and issues. **Staff**

- Print orders from Office email. **Staff and Students**
- Enter orders into Filemaker database. **Staff and Students**
- Sort article citations (Get articles ready for paging) table space may be required. **Students**
- Page articles **Students**
- Scan articles **Students**
- Import articles into Ariel from Lanppy network folders. **Students**
- Send articles to patrons email via Ariel. **Students**
- Cancel unfiled article citations and notify the patron by email or phone. **Staff**

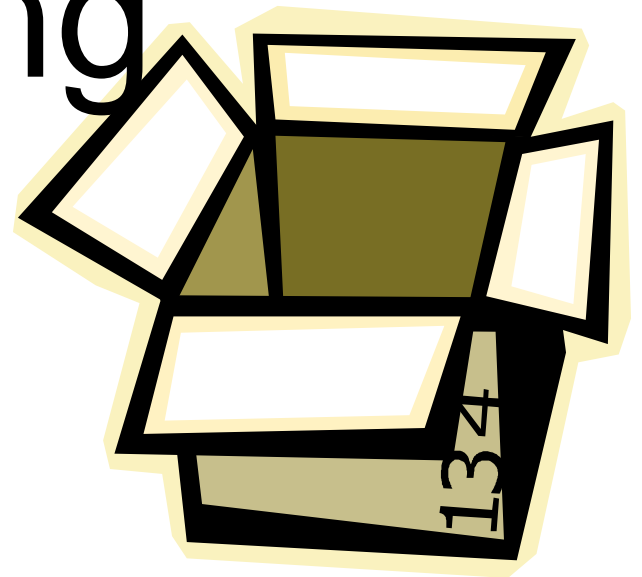
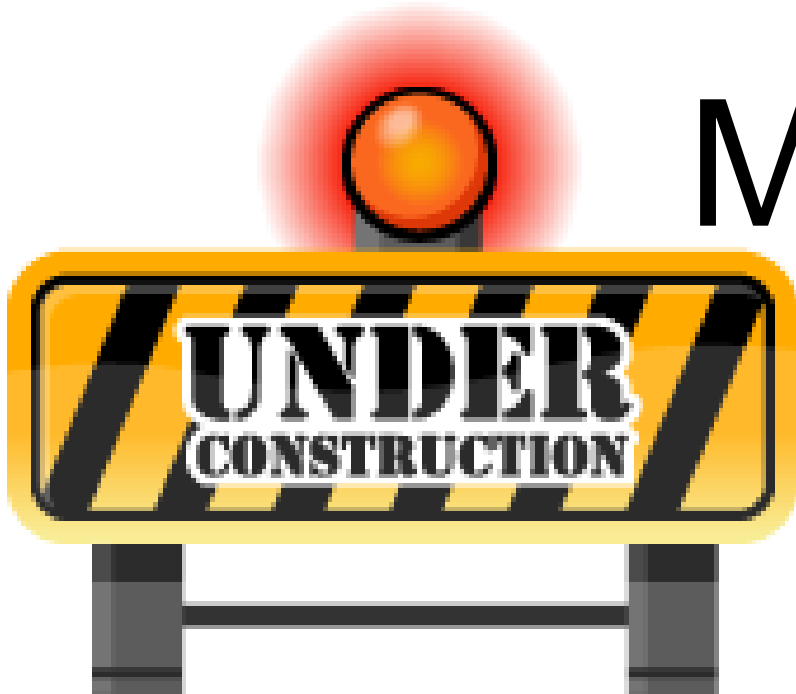
and simple. The faculty
come at all;





Renovation Construction

Moving



Duck Awards

WONDER WOMAN AWARD

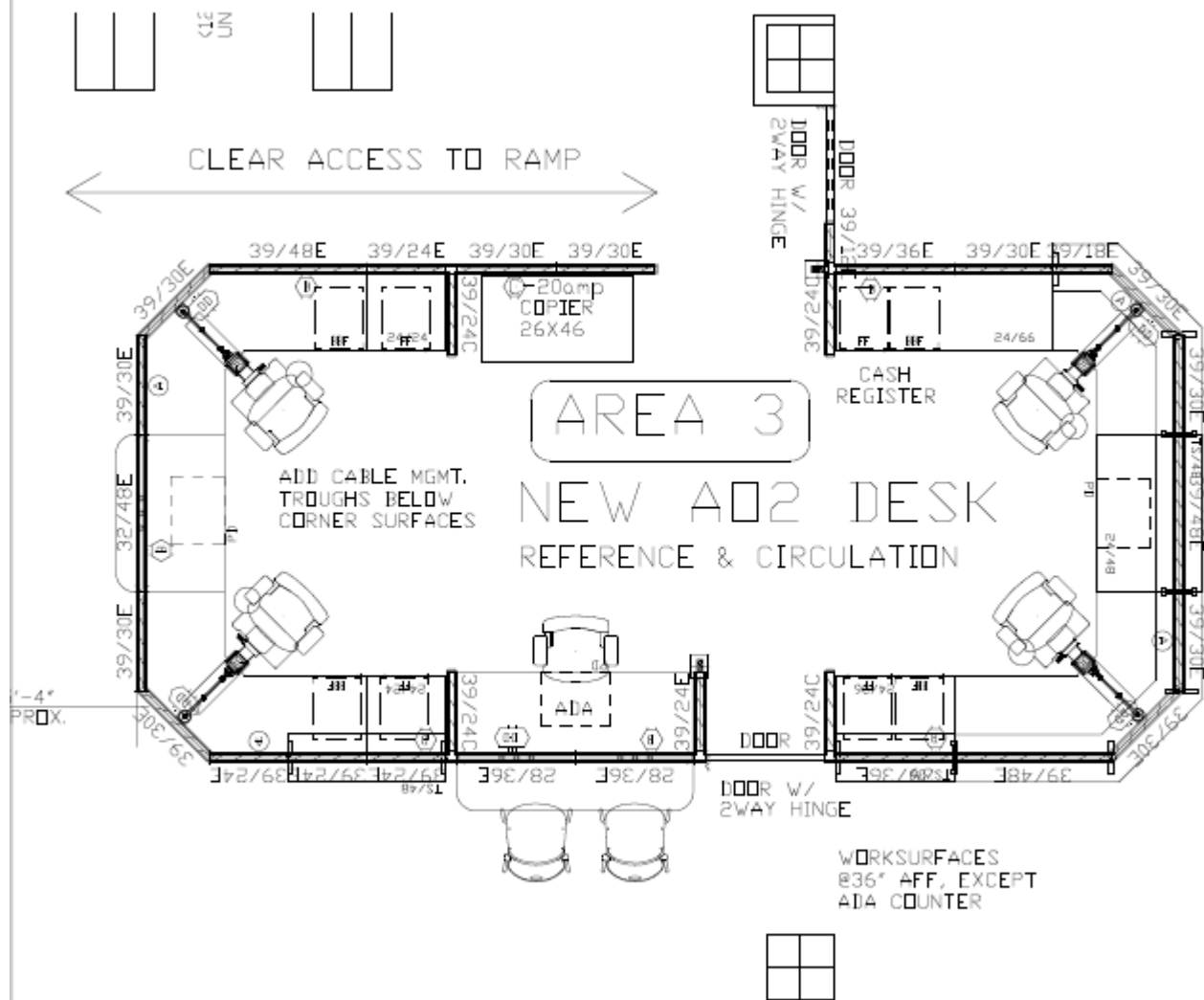


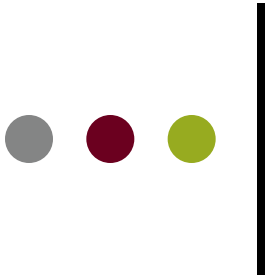
Nicole Theis-Mahon

IN RECOGNITION OF VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HEALTH
SCIENCES LIBRARIES AND THE DIVISION OF RESEARCH,
COLLECTIONS AND ACCESS SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
MINNESOTA

Signature

Date





Katherine Chew

chewx002@umn.edu

612-626-3017

Speech:

[Slide 1] / INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is Katherine Chew and I am the Associate Director for Research, Collections and Access Services for the Health Sciences Libraries at the University of Minnesota.

My presentation, *FUSION: Melding Reference and Access Services into a Single User Service Point in an Academic Health Sciences Library*, will be focusing on the human element behind the integration and the issues/challenges and successes that we experienced – the “Cliff Notes” version!

The Health Sciences Libraries at the University of Minnesota consists of the Bio-Medical Library, the Veterinary Medical Library and the Owen Wangenstein Historical Library of Biology and Medicine. They serve the Academic Health Center, which is comprised of six schools and colleges of medicine, public health, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine as well as allied health programs -- clinical laboratory medicine, mortuary science, and occupational therapy, physical therapy and rehabilitation science. Interdisciplinary efforts include the Centers for Spirituality and Healing, Bioethics, Cancer Center, Infectious Disease Research & Policy, Animal Health & Food Safety, Drug Design, and the Biomedical Genomics Center.

Over 70 percent of Minnesota's health care professionals are produced by the Academic Health Center.

[Slide 2]

Change Driver #1: Space Planning

Beginning in 2006, the Bio-Medical Library experienced several change drivers. The first involved the recommendations of a 2006-2007 Space Planning Team. This team had been tasked with looking at the current physical spaces, which had been characterized on a LibQual survey as having as much charm as a minimum security prison, and to come up with ways to maximize our spaces and position ourselves for future ventures. The team took into consideration a significant shift of the foreign language journal collection to storage, declining gate and copy center traffic, as well as a proposed use of any extra freed up space to house a newly created Academic Health Center Institute for Health Informatics.

[Slide 3]

When constructed, the main entry into the Bio-Medical Library was through the ground floor (on this diagram, the 3rd floor) and patrons were greeted with a **[click]** service desk that combined circulation, interlibrary loan and copy center services, with the reference desk located further in. Over time, a lower level entrance, **[click]** which is part of an interconnected underground complex

(think Minnesota winters), grew in prominence. The reference service desk moved down to that level in the 1980s, which also boasted a circulation and reserves service desk as well.

As staffing levels, gate counts, copy center and reference desk use decreased over time, the question had arisen about whether or not it was cost effective or efficient to maintain so many service desks. There was also developing a change in philosophy about how to best utilize librarians' time – specifically by pulling them off the physical reference desk to concentrate more on liaison and course-integrated instructional duties.

However, when the 2006-07 Space Team held staff forums about the feasibility of combining the 2nd floor reference and circulation service desks there was considerable push-back from the reference and circulation staff. Mainly what was voiced at the time was the question – if it aint broke, why fix it? Articulated as well was the desire by the librarians to continue to staff the physical reference desk. The staff could not see any advantages in combining the two desks and just exploring the question was enough to create worry and speculation about staff roles and responsibilities expectations – from reference staff about performing circulation functions and from circulation staff about reference competencies that would be required of a largely student desk staff.

The HSL director felt differently. Due to an initial limited budget, only the most minor of recommendations were possible to implement when the 2006-07 Space Team concluded. The director then sought and received considerable one-time funding from the University Libraries administration to act upon the more ambitious recommendations. A phase two 2nd floor Space Planning Team was convened in December 2007 to follow up and implement those recommendations. Among the team charges was a bullet point that read "Create a vibrant, functional research service point." Clarification by the 2nd floor Space Team from the director revealed the bias by the director that a combined, single service point was the direction she wished the team to explore.

[Slide 4]

Change Driver #2: Re-organization

At roughly about the same time as the convening of the 2nd floor Space Team, another change driver was occurring.

In October of 2007, the director announced that she was planning on re-organizing.

[Slide 5]

The organizational structure for the Health Sciences Libraries at that time was very flat – the director had nine managers reporting directly to her and she wanted to reduce this amount to give her more strategic time management flexibility.

The new concept involved grouping some of the services into generally two major categories – those services that involve the physical building/collections and supported education/research and those that could be conducted “out of building.” For this she created two new divisions – the division of Research, Collections and Access Services and the division of Liaison, Education and Interdisciplinary Services. Liaison, Education and Interdisciplinary Services included the majority of the liaison librarians, for whom it could be said, “have laptop, will travel”.

Research, Collections and Access Services grouped together technical services, collections, access services and the Wangenstein Historical Library – all of which were considered to be tied in one way or another with the physical building/collection.

Perhaps the most startling change to the staff was that the managing of the reference desk was moved as a service from direct librarian control to under Access Services which comprise of circulation, interlibrary loan, reserves, and copy services. The rationale was that reference services revolved around the physical reference desk and in conjunction with all of the Access Services functions could be considered part of a suite of services that supported research and education.

The announcement of the re-organization, along with the convening of the 2nd floor Space Planning Team, created a flurry of rumors and a great deal of anxiety. While the majority of the staff did not see any change to their roles and responsibilities, there were a few key staff members whose positions, roles and responsibilities would change dramatically.

I have indicated those positions that were most affected by the re-organization. The positions in maroon were those converted to associate directorships for the new divisions, the ones in blue are manager positions that changed from director direct reports to reporting to one of the associate directors, and those in green are staff whose roles, responsibilities or reporting lines changed significantly.

[Slide 6]

Here is what the org chart currently looks like today, with the key positions marked. When reference services was re-located within Access Services, it came with, initially, three staff positions – the **(click)** Reference Desk coordinator (a paraprofessional), **(click)** his assistant and **(click)** one 25% FTE librarian. For these three, they now were no longer supervised by a professional librarian, but a non-librarian manager, and in addition the assistant was slated to be transferred again to the Liaison, Education and Interdisciplinary group when an associate director was chosen **(click)** – and the position

has since fallen vacant. This meant that the Reference Services Coordinator would be down-graded from a supervisory position – though he would be keeping his current pay level. Also affected was the **(click)** Circulation/Fines Manager who supervised two FTEs and circulation desk students. The FTEs that he supervised were bumped up to direct supervision by the Access Services manager and he was also slated to be down-graded to a non-supervisory position – again retaining his pay level. Over the course of the year, another position, the **(click)** Copy Center Manager, would also change significantly. I will come back to that one later.

[Slide 7]

In William Briggs' *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*, he defines

Change as situational. Out with the old, in with the new. It's a physical move, a new process, a hire or a retirement.

On the other hand ---

Transition involves a psychological re-orientation process as people come to terms with change and how it affects them, their jobs, their responsibilities or expectations.

I was asked to take on the Associate Directorship for Research, Collections and Access Services, and officially assumed the position around the 1st of January 2008. The director had spent considerable time before announcing the re-organization discussing the proposed changes with the staff members that it would affect the most. This unfortunately did not stop the tsunami of rumor, anxiety or speculation as to the director's motives for making such a move or for pushing for the combined service desk. Some staff members believed that they were being targeted directly for some perceived fault by the director, that certain services were being positioned to be axed and was all of this due to budget constraints that the director was not being candid about.

My initial tasks as Associate Director was to first help integrate reference services into Access Services and then work towards making the staffing portion of an integrated service desk into a successful collaborative unit. It made my job a bit easier in that, due to increasingly declining librarian staffing, the reference desk had been staffed for some time with paraprofessional personnel from nearly every department in the library. So, while this meant that there were no rigid silos of who did what that needed to be overcome, there did appear to be considerable anxiety, fear and confusion that needed to be addressed. It was also helpful that the 2nd Floor Space Team was also composed of a cross-section of departments – reference services, liaison and access services.

The director recognized that there were going to be issues or challenges to integrating reference services into the Access Services department. She contracted with the University Libraries HR to hire a professional group facilitator, someone who had worked with the library many times on different projects and so was familiar with the workings of the library and most of its staff. The facilitator was initially to help conduct a "team-building" half-day retreat on an off-site location and then be on hand for any needed follow-up.

I met with the facilitator in early December 2007, where we discussed the outline of the retreat and what we hoped to accomplish, such as answering questions and creating preliminary to-do lists. A date and site was scheduled in early January 2008. From the beginning the Access Services group plus Reference had no trouble voicing their views. Since many of the participants found the term "team building" somewhat of an insult, as they had always considered the entire library a team, the retreat was quickly renamed the "Transition Retreat." They had also queried the need for the retreat (a why us?), but were lured with the promise of a free lunch at the Campus Club, a place many of them had never been.

In the few weeks before the retreat – it took some doing to find an open space in the schedules of eleven people – the facilitator conducted private interviews with all the participants. In those interviews the staff were able to anonymously express themselves in answer to a series of

questions and the results were shared with the director and myself before the retreat.

[Slide 8]

Here are the questions. The answers to these questions ranged widely, but common themes that emerged involved concerns about

- Inconsistent information sharing/dialogue
- Supporting details about specific duties and responsibilities were unclear and they
- Needed clarity about any changes to policies, processes, procedures and training

The facilitator crafted an agenda for the retreat and it took place on the 18th of January, a Friday. It quickly became apparent that the facilitator's carefully crafted agenda was not going to be completed. This was a group of people who were very apprehensive, troubled and generally just confused about what was happening. The facilitator had opened the retreat with a warm-up on exploring trends affecting the library, which was then followed by a question/dialogue exercise where the staff members wrote questions on 3x5 cards and then I and the Access Services manager tried to answer them. It was during this session that the facilitator and I realized that we needed to throw out the rest of the agenda, and spend the rest of the retreat concentrating on listening to the questions the group was asking and replying to them as fully and as completely as possible – including saying "I don't know the answer to that, but I will find out".

[Slide 9]

Active listening played an important role in this and subsequent meetings.

“Active listening is an important way to bring about changes in people. Clinical and research evidence shows that sensitive listening is a most effective agent for individual personality change and group development. Listening brings about changes in peoples attitudes toward themselves and others; it also brings about changes in their basic values and personal philosophy.”

[Slide 10]

The main components of Active Listening include

- Attentive body language
 - [Eye contact]
 - [Facial expressions]
 - [Body movement]
- Following skills – allowing the speaker the space to tell their story in their own way
 - [attentive silences]
 - [infrequent, timely and considered questions]
- Noting all of the cues, both verbal and nonverbal
 - [speech patterns]
 - [facial and body expressions]
- Reflecting skills – restating the feeling and/or content with understanding and acceptance
 - [paraphrasing / checking periodically that you’ve understood]

- [reflect back feelings and content]
- [summarize the major issues]

The Transition Retreat ended with the group feeling a bit more up-beat and positive about the coming changes and eager to participate in the next session, which was to be a workflow brainstorming session about the proposed changes.

In the interval between the two sessions, two immediate issues had to be resolved. We were on the brink of starting a new semester and the reference assistant needed to know if she was to continue in her role as reference assistant or begin as the new liaison assistant.

Since the associate director for liaison, education and interdisciplinary services had not yet been chosen, and the liaison assistant position job duties had also not yet be written, a quick meeting between interested parties determined that the reference assistant would continue with reference services until the Fall 2008 semester.

This meant that the coordinator for reference services continued in his job class for several more months and he and the reference assistance had a whole semester and summer session to work out any procedure/process changes needed for integrating reference services and also to account for the loss of the reference assistant position.

A more simpler request was to have the 25% FTE librarian be re-assigned to my direct supervision, so that she would be mentored and rated by a librarian and not a non-professional. This small re-assignment greatly helped her self-esteem and re-asserted her professional value to the department and the library as a whole.

The brainstorming meeting took place roughly about three weeks after the retreat. This time I facilitated the meeting, with one member offering to take notes.

[Slide 11]

One of the first things decided was that the department needed a new name as Access Services no longer actually reflected the additional services. **(click)** After some suggestions and discussion it was determined that the term, **(click)** Public Services, while not fancy, was an acceptable name. The meeting room contained a white board that was used to map out workflow requirements, such as staffing, physical spaces, policies, inter-connectivity and any identified issues or challenges.

[Slide 12]

As discussion of workflows, physical space needs and potential inter-connectivity progressed, staff

spontaneously created collaborative task force/work groups that would investigate the various issues identified with either staffing, space or training concerns. These working groups then produced reports and other workflow documents that were shared between the groups and later presented, in a group format, to the director.

I met with many of the small task groups over the next several months to discuss their work and provide feedback and direction as needed.

It was quickly determined that a current position, that of the Copy Center Manager, would be re-configured to straddle the reference and circulation world, tentatively called a Public Services Assistant. This position would take on many of the duties of the departing reference assistant, while at the same time continuing to operate as a copy center/interlibrary loan/circulation desk staff member. It was a way to ensure that there was communication and understanding of workflows and policies between the services. The position would also become "active" when the current reference assistant moved on to liaison duties with the beginning of Fall semester. The reference assistant and the copy center manager worked together through the spring and summer to map out and cross-train the responsibilities for the newly created public services assistant position.

We re-assembled again in July, to touch base as a group, to evaluate the progress of the task groups, discuss construction contingency plans, staffing of the integrated service desk, identified cross-training needs and address any issues that had cropped up in meantime. To ensure that the group was not inhibited by the thought "can we/are we allowed to do this," the motto for the meeting was "What-ever works to provide excellent patron service." What was interesting to note, was that the staff were actually enjoying these sessions and wanted to meet more often as a group, which unfortunately was not practical.

[Slide 13]

While the staff was becoming more comfortable with the coming changes, the actual physical ones were looming large. Portions of the 2nd floor were to be inaccessible for several weeks just prior to the beginning of the Fall semester due to re-wiring, re-configuration of the public computing area, the breaking down of the current reference, circulation and third floor desks and then the re-creation of the new, integrated service desk.

As part of the renovation domino effect, office musical chairs was underway – the interlibrary loan/copy center office re-located to the second floor – the staff undergoing the trauma of losing valuable window space in order to be closer to the action. Other staff had to move out of offices with doors into cubicles or share an

office where before they had it to themselves. While there was a good deal of grumbling, most of it was good-natured and once moved, staff discovered the advantages of the new spaces – better interaction with colleagues and students or more work space.

[Slide 14]

DUCK Awards

As part of an effort to ensure division cohesiveness and also to tell the Research, Collections and Access Services division, after what could be considered a very stressful year, that I considered everyone had put in a great effort, in December I held the DUCK Awards. Now, I couldn't come up with a good acronym for the division (depending on how you re-arranged the letters, it was either CRASS or CRAP), but I had found these little plastic ducks with medals and so the DUCK Awards were born. Everyone in the division got one and many of them were silly, but they celebrated that everyone in the group had an important job to do, that they made a difference during a difficult year and who really needs an excuse for a party?

The DUCK awards stand for:

Dedicated / devoted / determined / dependable /
discerning

Unselfish / unswerving / uncanny / understanding
/unflinching

Cheerful / committed / confident / collaborative /
colleagues
[who are]
Knowledgeable / Keen / key players / [and] kindred
spirits

[Slide 15]

Here is a view of the new configuration.
We have been using the integrated service desk for almost two semesters and have identified some continuing issues and challenges. Because they are working closer to the student circulation staff, the reference staff are able to observe and intervene when it appears that one of the student staff is attempting to answer an information request that would best be handled by the reference staff.

This has resulted in an overhaul of the student training, concentrating on ensuring that the students can handle basic questions, but also to train them in knowing when a question should be referred to the reference staff, especially when that section of the integrated desk is not busy. The students are becoming more comfortable with turning over questions to the reference staff. While the reference staff has had to perform some circulation duties, such as checking out an occasional book or pulling something from reserve, the initial fears of spending all their time on circulation duties has not come to pass. We have been monitoring desk staffing and feel with

sufficient training, could reduce circulation side staffing down to one person during non-peak hours.

Conclusion

Our success in integrating the circulation and reference desk depended on several things – the library already had a culture of teamwork, where there were no rigid departmental silos. The staff also had a great deal of pride in providing excellent patron service and were willing to consider and work towards changes that would improve service. The Access Services Manager, now the Public Services Manager, proved to be a Rock of Gibraltar in supporting and promoting the transition. Providing avenues where active listening could take place ensured that staff could express themselves and feel that their views, concerns or input were taken seriously.

[Slide 16]

Thank you.

If you want the multi-volume version,
please feel free to contact me